

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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USIA-06 AID-05 DHA-02 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 TRSE-00

XMB-02 OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 AGR-05

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R 301750Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7746

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

ANEMBASSY BONN 102

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUN NY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 COTONOU 1648

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, DM

SUBJ: KEREKOU ANNOUNCES "REVOLUTIONARY DICTATORSHIP" WILL
WIPE OUT DAHOMEY'S TRADITIONAL ELITE

REF COTONOU 1628

SUMMARY: IN A DREARY DIDACTIC SPEECH AT LOKOSSA ON THE THIRD
ANNIVERSARY OF THE MILITARY CMD THAT BROUGHT HIM TO POWER,
PRES KEREKOU ANNOUNCED THAT HIS "REVOLUTIONARY DICTATORSHIP"
WOULD PROCEED TO THE COMPLETE LIQUIDATION OF THE OLD ELITE
OF THE COUNTRY, LEAVING ONLY THE MILITARY, PATRIOTIC WORKERS,
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PEASANTS AND PROGRESSIVE INTELLECTUALS. THE PROPERTY OF ALL

PERSONS WHO HAVE LEFT THE COUNTRY VOLUNTARILY SINCE LAST NOV 30 WILL BE CONFISCATED UNLESS THEY RETURN BY NOV 30, 1975. ND "CENTRAL POLITICAL ORGANIZATION FOR REVOLUTIONARY MILITANTS" IS FORESHADOWED; THIS COULD INDICATE THAT A REVOLUTIONARY MARXIST PARTY WILL BE FORMED SOON. THE SPEECH CONTAINED FEW SPECIFICS AND THERE WERE NO ATTACKS AGAINST INDIVIDUAL WESTERN COUNTRIES. HOWEVER, KEREKOU AS USUAL BLAMED "INTERNATIONAL IMPERIALISM" AND ITS "LOCAL STOOGES" FOR DAHOMEY'S ILLS. END SUMMARY.

1. IN HIS ADDRESS AT LOKOSSA, ON THE OCCASION OF THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE MILITARY COUP THAT BROUGHT HIM TO POWER, KEREKOU MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. THE MANY PLOTS AGAINST HIM SINCE 1972 HAVE BEEN HEALTHFUL BECAUSE EVERY SUCCESSFUL REVOLUTION PROVOKES COUNTER-REVOLUTIONS, WHICH SERVE TO STRENGTHEN AND ENSURE THE VICTORY OF THE DOMINANT HISTORICAL FORCE. IN THIS STAGE THAT FORCE IS THE PROLETARIAN-WORKER-MILITARY CLASSES. KEREKOU EXPLAINED

THE VARIOUS PLOTS AND ALLEGED PLOTS. THE ONE IN JUNE 75 (NOTE: WHICH IN TRUTH WAS A POPULAR INSURRECTION AGAINST HIM TRIGGERED HIS MURDER OF HIS INTERIOR MIN AIKPE WHICH HE EXPLAINED WITH A COVER STORY INVOLVING THE HUMILIATION OF HIS OWN WIFE) HE CHARACTERIZED AS A "SHAMEFUL JUNCTION BETWEEN ANARCHO-SYNDICALISTS AND EXILES.. FOLLOWING THE DOUBLE TREASON OF TWO THOROUGHLY REACTIONARY INDIVIDUALS RECRUITED AMONG THE TRAITORS OF THE NATION" (MEANING PRESUMABLY HIS WIFE AND AIKPE). THE ALLEGED CURRENT PLOT HE ASCRIBED TO ZINSOU "THE PATENT AGENT OF INTERNATIONAL IMPERIALISM".

B. OTHER THAN SUCCESSFUL REPRESSION OF PLOTS, "ACHIEVEMENTS" OF THE REGIME INCLUDE NATIONALIZATION OF THE VITAL ECONOMIC SECTORS TO MAKE THEM MORE EFFICIENT AND MORE CONSISTENT WITH THE SOCIALIST OPTION, EDUCATION REFORM AND SOME ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES.

C. "INTERNATIONAL IMPERIALISM", WHICH TOOK OVER DAHOMEY'S MEANS OF PRODUCTION AND WEALTH BY PILLAGE, IS AT ROOT OF DAHOMEY'S TROUBLES. IT WORKS THROUGH THE "SMALL ARROGANT POL-
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ITICAL-BUREAUCRATIC BOURGEOISIE" MINORITY AND THE REMNANTS OF TRADITIONAL FEUDALISM, ITS "LOCAL STOOGES".

D. BETWEEN THE REVOLUTION AND THE COUNTERREVOLUTION THERE MUST BE A FIGHT TO THE DEATH. IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE VICTORY OF THE PEOPLE, THEIR PRESIDENT, THE "REVOLUTIONARY DICTATORSHIP", MUST BE STRENGTHENED.

E. THE ESSENTIAL CURRENT TASKS ARE THESE:

1) "COMPLETE LIQUIDATION OF THE ECONOMIC BASE OF
LOCAL

REACTION" (I.E., PRIVATE PROPERTY ACCUMULATIONS)

2) "TOTAL LIQUIDATION ON THE SPOT OF ALL TRAITORS, WHETHER
THEY ARE OPERATING IN THE OPEN OR NOT." (TROUBLESOME TRADE
UNIONISTS WOULD PRESUMABLY BE INCLUDED).

3) "FINAL LIQUIDATION OF THE POLITICAL-BUREAUCRATIC-BOUR-
GEOISIE" (MEANING THE OLD ELITE AND INCLUDING THE POLITICIANS,
MOST SENIOR CIVIL SERVANTS, BUSINESSMEN, PROFESSIONALS AND
LIBERAL INTELLECTUALS).

4) LIQUIDATION OF REACTIONARY IDEOLOGY, WHICH PREACHES THE
EXPLOITATION OF MAN BY MAN, AND ITS REPLACEMENT BY MARXIST-
LENINISM.

F. ALL DAHOMEANS WHO LEFT THE COUNTRY FOR PERSONAL REASONS
AFTER LAST NOV 30 MUST RETURN BY
NOV 30, 1975 AND "PLACE
THEMSELVES RESOLUTELY ALONGSIDE OUR FIGHTING PEOPLES. THE PROP-
ERTY OF THOSE DELIBERATELY CHOOSE THE REACTIONARY CAMP
AND STAY ABROAD OVER THE DEADLINE WILL BE CONFISCATED.

G. THE DAHOMEAN PEOPLE MUST BE MOBILIZED, THROUGH ENERGIZING
REVOLUTIONARY BODIES, EXTENDING TERRITORIAL ADMINISTRATIVE
REFORM, AND ESTABLISHING A CENTRALIZED POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

EMBRACING THE MILITANTS OF THE REVOLUTION.
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2. COMMENT: THIS SPEECH, DELIVERED IN A HARSH, DIDACTIC MANNER, WAS A DREARY PRODUCT OF THE MOST PEDESTRIAN OF MARXIST/LENINIST PENS. IN STYLE AND INTELLECTURAL CALIBER IF COMPARES WITH THE STALINIST PRIMERS OF THE NINETEEN TWENTIES.

3. THOUGH THE SPEECH WAS MORE A COLLECTION OF OUTWORN MARXIST SLOGANS AND EXPRESSIONS THAN AN ACTION DOCUMENT, IT NEVERTHELESS INDICATED HOW KEREKOU SAW THE CHARACTER OF HIS REGIME AND ITS FUTURE TASKS: HE HAS COME OUT OPENLY TO SAY THAT THE REGIME IS A "REVOLUTIONARY DICTATORSHIP" (HIS VERSION OF "PROLETARIAN DICTATORSHIP") DETERMINED TO WIPE OUT THE OLD ELITE OF THE COUNTRY INCLUDING CIVIL SERVANTS NOW SERVING
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THE REGIME. THERE IS TO BE NOTHING LEFT BUT SOLDIERS, PROGRESSIVE INTELLECTUALS, PATRIOTIC WORKERS AND PEASANTS. THIS OF COURSE IS NOT NEWS, BUT KEREKOU DID PUT IT ALL IN A NUTSHELL.

4. THE ONLY CONCRETE MEASURE ANNOUNCED WAS THE EXPROPRIATION OF THE PROPERTY OF PERSONS WHO GOT OUT OF THE COUNTRY AFTER KEREKOU DECLARED DAHOMEY TO BE MARXIST/LENINIST LAST NOV 30. IT WILL ALSO SURELY BE APPLIED TO THOSE ABROAD BEFORE THEN, INCLUDING PERSONS LIKE THE AMB'S LANDLORD RENE ZINSOU WHO WAS SENTENCED TO DEATH IN ABSENTIA BY THE KANGAROO COURT LAST MARCH. NO DOUBT MANY WHO HAVE GONE ABROAD IN SEARCH OF JOBS WILL ALSO BE AFFECTED (IN DAHOMEY THERE HAS ALWAYS BEEN SUBSTANTIAL UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG TRAINED PEOPLE AND SOME OF THE THOUSANDS WHO HAVE FOR ECONOMIC REASONS LIVED FOR DECADES IN FRANCE OR ELSEWHERE IN FRANCOPHONE AFRICA OWN PROPERTY HERE).

5. SOME OF OUR FELLOW DIPLOMATS WHO HEARD THE SPEECH BREATHED A SIGHT OF RELIEF. THEY VIEWED KEREKOU'S REMARKS AS RESTRAINED BECAUSE HE DID NOT ANNOUNCE ANY FURTHER SPECIFIC RADICAL ACTIONS (OTHER THAN EXPROPRIATION OF THE PROPERTY OF EXPATRIATE DAHOMEANS) SUCH AS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL CURRENCY, NATIONALIZATION OF THE REMAINING PRIVATE COMPANIES, ETC., NOR DID HE ATTACK ANY SPECIFIC "IMPERIALIST" POWERS. WE, ON THE CONTRARY, SEE IN THE SPEECH A GRIM FORDYST OF WHAT THE NEAR FUTURE HOLDS FOR THIS UNLUCKY COUNTRY. CLASS WAR IS TO BE WAGED RELENTLESSLY. NOR IS THERE ANY REASON NOT TO EXPECT THE KEREKOU GOVT TO ANNOUNCE, THIS WEEK OR NEXT, FURTHER REVOLUTIONARY MEASURES, OR TO RESUME ATTACKS ON WESTERN COUNTRIES, JUST AS IT DID FOLLOWING KEREKOU'S ADDRESS LAST NOV 30, ON THE OCCASION OF THE PREVIOUS ANNIVERSARY OF THE REVOLUTION.

6. KEREKOU'S REFERENCES TO A "CENTRALIZED POLITICAL ORGANIZATION OF REVOLUTIONARY MILITANTS" IS POSSIBLY THE EXPRESSION OF INTENTION FORMALLY TO ESTABLISH A MARXIST/LENINIST PARTY SOMETIME IN THE NEAR FUTURE. IN THE PAST THREE MONTHS, NEW MARXIST POLITICAL AND PARAMILITARY ORGANIZATIONS HAVE COME INTO BEING ALL OVER THE COUNTRY AND AN ENTIRE NEW POLITICAL CONTROL STRUCTURE, TO PARALLEL THE TRADITIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE

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MACHINERY OF THE STATE, HAS BEEN PUT INTO PLACE. THEY LOOK LIKE COMPONENTS OF A FUTURE MARXIST-LENINIST PARTY.

7. LASTLY, KEREKOU DID NOT UTTER ONE WORD OF PUBLIC WELCOME, OR EVEN ACKNOWLEDGE THE PRESENCE OF, NIGERIA'S COMMISSIONER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (COL JOSEPH GARBA), THE ONLY IMPORTANT FOREIGN GUEST, WHO WAS SITTING BESIDE HIM. END COMMENT.
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